



Accessions

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ADDRESS
TO THE
PUBLIC
ON THE
HOME FOR THE INDUSTRIOUS BLIND,
BY
THE MANAGERS
OF THE
PENNSYLVANIA INSTITUTION
FOR THE
INSTRUCTION OF THE BLIND.

PHILADELPHIA:

JOHN C. CLARK & SON, PRINTERS, 230 DOCK STREET.

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MANAGERS OF THE INSTITUTION.

PATRON.

HIS EXCELLENCY, ANDREW G. CURTIN,
GOVERNOR OF THE STATE.

PRESIDENT.

SAMUEL BRECK.

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CASPAR MORRIS, M. D.	EDWARD TOWNSEND.

PRINCIPAL.

WILLIAM CHAPIN, A.M.

TO THE PUBLIC.

IN the year 1851, a special committee of the Board of Managers of the Pennsylvania Institution for the Instruction of the Blind, consisting of the President and the Chairmen of the Standing Committees, reported upon the establishment of a permanent HOME OF INDUSTRY, for the Blind of both sexes who have been educated in this Institution, and some extracts of the Report are here given.

“The achievement of this object should be carried out step by step, according to the state of our finances, until we procure for them suitable shelter, with supervision, in the practice of such mental or manual skill as our school and work departments may have given them.

“To refuse this and dismiss them to make their way in the world, unfriended and unprotected, would be, in many such cases, the means of obliterating all they have learned and consigning them to hopeless dependence, a burden to the public and to themselves; and to that extent, to become living evidences of failure in the Institution from which they were inconsiderately discharged. It would render fruitless the whole cost of their education. They would inevitably, in such a state of helplessness, relapse into ignorance and fall perhaps into vice and utter destitution.

“The proper preventive is the establishment of a RETREAT, where their bread can be earned, their morals protected, and a just estimate put upon their talents; where their earnings will be secured to them, and their deficiency in skill humanely considered; the strong and skillful workers receiving their over earnings, and the feebler a fair and economical support.

“Your Committee therefore think it is the duty of the Board of Managers to provide a HOME, in which the pupils who have received instruction in our Institution shall have an opportunity to gain a livelihood by their industrial efforts directed by our supervision.

“Our system, to be complete, should contain a permanent HOME of Industry for all the Blind of our school, who have no friends to receive them, or would otherwise be deficient in the means of self-support.

“This Home is to be considered a sequence to the educational department. It is to follow the definite period of instruction, and, of course, without at all interfering with it. It is not to be an asylum for those who have not been educated by us.

“The following rules are proposed as the basis of its organization:—

“I. The inmates should receive pay for their labour and be charged for their board.

“II. When any of them fall short of earning a support, by physical or natural inability, the charge for their board should be graduated accordingly; and when unable to work they should be supported at the expense of the establishment.

“Thus will be accomplished a permanent relief; then will our noble charity be perfected; then will this monument of christian philanthropy exhibit its beautiful and humane mission; and then indeed will it occupy a position satisfactory to every benevolent heart, and

give comfortable subsistence for life to worthy and industrious blind persons."

The committee concluded their very appropriate report with the two following resolutions, which were adopted by the Board.

"*Resolved*, That (not exceeding) ten males and ten females (graduates) be immediately constituted inmates on the plan of a HOME; and the expense, if any, be defrayed out of the funds of the Institution.

"*Resolved*, That — copies of this Report be printed in pamphlet form, for distribution among the rich and benevolent, for the purpose of procuring gifts in money, or by legacy, for the special establishment of a Home."

The first resolution having been carried into effect laid the foundation of a "HOME FOR THE INDUSTRIOUS BLIND," nearly ten years ago. Of its successful working and growing wants, the experience of this period now enables us to speak.

Its inmates have all been industriously employed. Some have been promoted to be teachers, and governesses over the younger children; several give valuable assistance in the musical department, and all, by their excellent moral deportment and faithful industry, present an example and influence of great value to the younger pupils. The tone of the school is really elevated by their presence. They pay a reduced price for their board, which is deducted monthly from the prescribed rates of their earnings. They still derive improvement from the literary readings in the Institution, and continue to enjoy its musical advantages. They are not denied the privileges of social intercourse, and are now what they could not be elsewhere, active and useful members of the community.

We have here a plan of benevolence which must

commend itself to every practical philanthropist. Our Institution for the Instruction of the Blind, sustained by a wise State policy, receives and educates them. The larger number are prepared to go forth into the world and support themselves. The "HOME" department is for those only who are unequal to this, and by furnishing employment to them and superintending the execution and sale of their work, they become producers to the fullest extent of their ability.

The real expense of sustaining such a department is merely the difference between the cost of their subsistence and the reduced sum charged them for board. In the light of a charity, there could not be a more fruitful return for such an economical expenditure. In a moral and christian point of view, the beneficent result is still more gratifying.

The favourite theory for years with the Managers of this Institution has now been subjected to the test of experience, and the successful results are before us. We are encouraged to proceed and enlarge the operations of this good work. Other worthy and homeless graduates will apply from year to year for admission. But in accordance with the just principles of its foundation, this increase must be provided for by gifts and legacies for its support, and not be dependent upon funds appropriated for educational purposes.

In order to insure duration and permanency to this important branch of our Institution, we solicit the kind remembrance of the benevolent, in their charitable testamentary gifts.

Some of the inmates of the "Home" are even now verging towards middle age, and "every setting sun will find them older." The strength of youth diminishes from year to year, and will finally depart. A deficiency in their earnings will follow the advance of years. To

supply that deficiency is a matter of anxiety, and is now made the subject of an appeal to the public. Our desire is to obtain a capital that shall produce six thousand dollars a year. Already a beginning has been made. The late Thomas P. Cope gave for that fund, before his death, five hundred dollars. His example has been followed by others; and the Board of Managers has appropriated the amount received for legacies, bequeathed since the establishment of the "HOME," to the same fund.

We are thus preparing for the days of weakness and infirmity of old age. In order to aid our efforts, we invite posthumous gifts from the benevolent. Remember the Blind, in a spirit of pious and generous charity, in your testamentary bequests; give to "The Pennsylvania Institution for the Instruction of the Blind," in Philadelphia, for the use of the "HOME," in that Institution, such sums as your compassionating hearts may dictate. These gifts will come in slowly, yet in good time for our wants. They will be working their good with us, when the donor is receiving his reward in Heaven.

SAMUEL BRECK,

President of the Institution.

Philadelphia, February, 1861.

THOMAS C. JAMES, FRANKLIN PEALE, A. G. WATERMAN, JOHN C. CRESSON, EDWARD TOWNSEND.	} Committee on the Home.
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